

**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD ACTING AS THE LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY
SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING
NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA REVISIONS INITIATIVE
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE**

**FEBRUARY 24, 2010– 6:30 P.M.
CITY HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS – 1ST FLOOR
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA**

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Tom Welch, Chair	P
Patrick McTigue, Vice Chair	P
Catherine Maus [until 8:40]	P
Rochelle Golub	P
Maria Freeman [7:50]	P
Fred Stresau	P
Mike Moskowitz	A
Michelle Tuggle	A
Peter Witschen	P

Staff

Wayne Jessup, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning
Adrienne Ehle, Planner III
Terry Burgess, Zoning Administrator
Randall Robinson, Planner II
Michael Ciesielski, Planner II
James Koeth, Principal Planner
Jenni Morejon, Planner III
Deanna Bojman, Service Clerk
Sharon Miller, Assistant City Attorney
Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype Inc.

The Neighborhood Development Criteria Revisions (NDCR) Project: protecting the best qualities of Fort Lauderdale neighborhoods. This discussion includes possible future amendments to the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale, Volume II, Unified Land Development Regulations, (ULDR) to implement proposals.

Chair Welch called the meeting to order at 6:37.

Greg Brewton, Director of Planning and Zoning, introduced staff members present.

Mr. Brewton explained this was a special workshop for the public and the Board to provide comments to the documents created in November. A draft [modifications plan] would be created after this meeting, including the input received at this and earlier meetings.

Mr. Brewton explained that this process was the result of very interested individuals who had brought the item to the attention of the City Commission. Staff was working with the consultant to come up with ideas and eventually, ordinance changes to implement those ideas. Staff believed the Planning and Zoning Board is a vital part of this process.

Mr. Nore` Winter, Winter and Company, explained he would review the project, covering the following: Goals, Objectives and Actions and Potential Tools, then he would invite the Board's input. He stated there were as yet no recommendations regarding any of the tools.

Mr. Winter said the project was organized in these steps:

- Understand existing conditions, including development trends and characteristics on the street and how the current regulations shaped built form in the various zoning districts
- Identify concerns, utilizing early citizen comments and public workshops

Mr. Winter said they were now reviewing alternatives to respond to concerns that had been raised. Based on comments received, they would proceed to draft the plan of action for potential alterations to the ULDR. That plan would be presented to the Board and City Commission for approval and code language would be drafted.

Mr. Winter stressed that there would be additional opportunity for public comment along the way.

[At 6:50 Ms. Freeman arrived]

Mr. Winter remarked that the list of concerns was extensive and focused on:

- Maintaining neighborhood character
- Mass and scale of buildings
- Privacy issues
- Parking
- Open space along the streets

Mr. Winter gave a Power Point presentation, a copy of which is included with these minutes for the public record.

Ms. Maus asked Mr. Winter if the changes would be applied as part of the code, or if they were going to be "more of an opt-in sort of thing." She believed neighborhoods could apply to be rezoned the new RS-8-A category. Mr. Winter replied that there could be three categories of implementation. Some changes could happen at a zone district level and apply City-wide; these would include such things as clarifications of definitions and interpretations and rules on which there was agreement. Other changes could apply to building types instead of zoning districts. Lastly, changes could apply to an overlay area. This could be opt-in, or based on a situation. Mr. Winter said they would make recommendations for how each tool should be applied.

Mr. Stresau advised Mr. Winter to use numbers or letters instead of bullet points to make referencing specific items easier.

Chair Welch opened the meeting for public comment.

Mr. Don Zimmer, architect, said he feared that undergrounding utility lines could not be covered in the ULDR. He said there was general agreement that it would be better to get more landscaping in residential areas, but there was currently a minimal requirement for housing. Mr. Zimmer explained the negative affect of locating garages behind main buildings, requiring a driveway that took up valuable landscaping space.

Mr. Lou Orosz of Growth Management Group, said he was representing his community apartments. He distributed a handout to Board members describing the apartments. Mr. Orosz stated this was a unique housing development that catered to very low-income people, and it had been in business for almost 60 years. He said the units had been built in the 50s and 60s when there was no plan unit development and very little off-street parking for multi-family units. Mr. Orosz noted that there were no subsidies for this housing; the occupants paid for them. Mr. Orosz wanted the City to acknowledge that these units existed. He said the owners wanted make sure the City allowed them to redevelop these properties, and that the zoning changes would be flexible, which would help them to serve that population.

Ms Golub had assumed that changes made would not usurp a PUD designation. Mr. Orosz said they wanted to make sure they did not get "zoned out of business." Mr. Brewton stated City staff had informed Mr. Orosz that in the event of redevelopment, there were several components that would need to be addressed, "versus what is there today... but obviously, if it were a situation where they wanted to do a PUD, subject to the land use allowances, that they would be able to come in and request something like that." Mr. Orosz provided Ms. Miller with a copy of the handout so it could be made part of the record.

Mr. Brewton was not certain these units met today's land use guidelines, and there were many factors that must be addressed if this property was redeveloped. He stated nothing had been submitted as yet. Mr. Orosz said they had no immediate

redevelopment plans, but when the property was redeveloped, it would meet the market needs and the needs of the City at that time.

Ms. Freeman hoped that when these units were redeveloped, the owner would tear down the existing units and create better housing.

Mr. Walter Nisbett asked if any of the changes would guarantee that once a project was started, it would be finished. Mr. Brewton explained that this process did not deal with this issue; this was a Florida Building Code issue that he was sure the Code Division would look into.

Mr. Gary Hecker was concerned about zoning designations. He remarked that neighborhood association meetings were not the best way to contact people because many people had issues with their associations. Mr. Hecker wished to see Zoning Board and developer actions on a ballot.

Mr. Hecker stated they must look at zoning and development in a "very holistic fashion" including mass transit, and low and moderate-cost housing. Mr. Hecker said they needed a lot more green space and permeability. He pointed out that they had an opportunity with the current lack of development to change the way the City did things, such as: looking at carrying capacity and Green codes, giving credits for installing solar panels and white metal roofs and for LEED certification.

Ms. Linda Brown asked the Board to urge the City Commission to act on this while they had this window of opportunity.

Mr. Fred Carlson, President of the Central Beach Alliance, said they had committees working on this plan. Mr. Carlson said cities that were attractive enough for people to "gush over" tended to have a mix of iconoclastic buildings; they were not cookie-cutter. He urged the Board to keep an open mind for things that were different and charming.

Mr. Carlson was concerned that they were not considering future parking for beach visitors. He said when they had discussed parking along the beach, the opinion was that "the first block next to the water is inappropriate for parking and the second block is too far away, so you won't have any." Mr. Carlson thought the "planning people, by and large, want to diminish cars, eliminate cars, and I don't think that's in the public psyche." He suggested the Planning Department consider public-funded parking.

Ms. Donna Mergenhagen's first concern was neighborhood compatibility, which she said had been an issue in her neighborhood "forever." She stated the current code was highly subjective and she had hoped this process would create a quantifiable way to measure compatibility. Ms. Mergenhagen's second concern was the integration of Green standards.

Ms. Golub agreed with Ms. Mergenhagen, but said it was difficult for her to comment because to her, this was very generic. She felt the concerns they were hearing related to the lack of specifics.

Ms. Marilyn Mamano stated she was a certified City Planner and had taught urban design and site planning at Florida Atlantic University for eight years. She said the consultant had done an excellent job identifying all of the issues. Ms. Mamano did not feel they should broaden this to include such issues as affordable housing and Green issues, but instead should concentrate on urban design issues. She said neighborhood compatibility must be addressed on a community-specific basis.

Ms. Mamano agreed it was currently difficult to judge neighborhood compatibility, and thought there must be more specificity. She urged the Board to "keep the ball rolling," because the community was becoming frustrated.

Mr. Mark Hill, President of the Riverside Park Residents Association, said his community already had many multi-family apartments in place, and he had heard nothing about how to bring those into compatibility with the amendment to the ULDR.

Ms. Marie Bissette said the Riverside Park neighborhood character study had been conducted five years ago, and addressed all of these issues plus Green initiatives, condo conversions, social services and overlays. She wanted to see this study used for their neighborhood.

Ms. Cara Campbell thought they should revive the idea of mother-in-law cottages located behind main houses. She thought it "unfathomable" that Fort Lauderdale did not mandate white roofs. She wanted water collection, such as the use of cisterns, addressed. Ms. Campbell felt if the City wanted sidewalks, the adjacent landowners should not be forced to maintain them. Ms. Campbell discussed Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk's "transect" design that provided organic transitions between architectural elements, and hoped the City would keep this in mind.

There being no other members of the public wishing to address the Board, Chair Welch closed the public input.

Chair Welch asked Mr. Winter when they would get to specifics. Mr. Winter stated the next step was to draft the recommendations in the modifications plan. This would not be in the actual zoning language but would still be in "planner-ese." However, it would contain specific recommendations regarding tools and dimensional standards. Their goal was to create a draft within the next two to three months. Mr. Winter asked the Board for their recommendations, based on their experience.

Ms. Golub asked why they could not address certain kinds of commercial standards in a mixed-use building as a building type. Mr. Winter said the mixed-use category opened

up a wider range. They could make recommendations specific to residential neighborhoods, as opposed to areas zoned for commercial and mixed-use. They may be coming up with recommended standards that addressed residential and would easily translate to mixed-use, and Mr. Winter anticipated identifying some standards that staff felt could be migrated into other zoning categories.

Ms. Golub said recurring issues included how height was measured, stepped setbacks and use types. She remembered there had been problems with cluster homes, and noted that this was a very difficult thing for those implementing the code to deal with because cluster homes had been permitted if a project had an aspect that would be of value to all of the units, no matter how insignificant that shared aspect was.

Mr. Witschen said the beach had been a prime example of the "pyramidal" design caused by "wedding cake" stepped setbacks and he did not want neighborhoods to be developed similarly. Mr. Witschen felt the neighborhoods that were faring best were those that had a heavy tree canopy and also had design articulation. He felt the areas of parking surfaces and cross-zoning compatibility must be addressed, and suggested that artificial barriers such as roadways and canals needed to be transparent.

Mr. Witschen thought they should also address the way some neighborhoods had developed with roadways that made it feel more like a commercial area than a residential one. He advocated making these areas more pedestrian-friendly.

Regarding height and density, Mr. Witschen believed interesting design should be stressed more than height. He preferred keeping the standards open, but acknowledged that keeping them too open did not work.

Mr. Stresau had attended one of the neighborhood sessions the consultant had held, and said he had heard concerns about the invasion of multi-family homes into single-family neighborhoods. He acknowledged that the past five to eight years had been a "developer's dream." Mr. Stresau had noted the variety of architecture in his own Rio Vista neighborhood. He said lots in many areas were smaller, and with the setbacks and driveways they were discussing, these smaller lots were no longer buildable. He felt the most important thing to talk about in the code was lot coverage.

Mr. Stresau did not believe taste could be legislated, and thought they should consider flexibility, even though he did not know how this could be defined. He felt the setbacks should vary depending on the width of the lot.

Mr. Stresau recalled that a primary community consideration had been people did not want new houses to have a view into existing yards, but he was unsure how this could be guaranteed. He thought this was one of the comments the neighborhoods had made about which nothing could be done.

Chair Welch liked the idea of using flexibility as an incentive to encourage developers to create designs that would be compatible with neighboring properties.

Ms. Maus agreed there were neighborhoods and types of designs that warranted incentives, but she did not want incentives utilized City-wide. She felt there was development currently happening that was driven by incentives. She thought they must consider whether or not an incentive was warranted on a 100-foot wide lot that would only be used to build a larger building.

Mr. Stresau recalled residents expressing concern about the interrelationship of commercial and residential but he did not think the consultant was addressing commercial. Mr. Brewton agreed the consultant was not addressing commercial, and noted residents were concerned about commercial development in mixed-use projects permitted in residential neighborhoods. He thought they could use the discussions this evening to create a goal or policy for this development. Mr. Brewton felt the code was not clear enough in defining the amount of commercial use that was required in a mixed-use development.

Since the Board did not see the majority of new construction, Ms. Golub said they must see that what was written gave sufficient guidance to ensure the City got the desired results.

Mr. Winter summarized themes he was hearing: how to raise the bar of quality of general development while accommodating flexibility, and to what extent should "carrots and sticks" be used. Mr. Winter suggested there were ways to provide flexibility, and these related to how detailed they wanted to be and how labor-intensive it would be to administer design review.

Mr. Winter stated one of the new innovations in code writing was to embed the intent statement, so anytime they were considering alternative means of compliance, they could refer to this statement. A menu could be devised to address individual alternative compliance issues. Another option was design review, which was less predictable and more labor intensive to administer.

Chair Welch wondered if it would be realistic to create different design overlays applicable to a neighborhood that could help define compatibility. Mr. Winter thought this warranted consideration, and noted that some communities had neighborhood conservation overlays, where each neighborhood had its own standards. Mr. Winter explained that this had become confusing and was not meeting people's expectations. He was working on one such community now, and one recommendation was to standardize the overlays into five categories. Chair Welch thought that offering such a "menu" for a neighborhood would encourage future development to be complementary to existing development.

Mr. Winter remarked that often, landscaping and lot coverage, pervious and impervious often became "mushed" together and sometimes they wanted to unbundle those. From a design standpoint, perviousness did not matter; to those concerned about sustainability and water retention these were important issues. From a neighborhood compatibility standpoint, the question was whether there was green space contributing to the public realm. He felt they might want to look at the definitions of landscape requirements and eliminate some of the confusion.

Regarding incentives, Mr. Winter noted that often, what they allowed was more mass and volume. He suggested that perhaps this should trigger a higher level of design review.

[Ms. Maus left the meeting at 8:40]

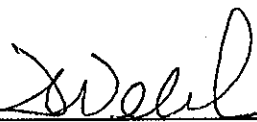
Mr. Winter acknowledged that cluster housing was broken, and he thought this might be the opportunity to promote positive cluster development.

Mr. Stresau mentioned a development in which he had been involved, that he thought could have benefited from allowing encroachment into the neighborhood view in order to create a more architecturally interesting building. Mr. Winter said rearranging elements on the site was an idea appropriate for flexibility where they could define how they responded to context.


Mr. Winter agreed they should be cognizant of sustainability, but noted they did not want to create a "double bind." They could therefore consider solar access, light and air access from a massing standpoint.

Mr. Brewton announced there would be another open house for public input after the first draft was created and distributed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.



Chair



Prototype